

Gettysburg College, Glatfelter Hall  
Old Quadrangle (West Side)  
Gettysburg  
Adams County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5442

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13-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

GETTYSBURG COLLEGE, GLATFELTER HALL HABS NO. PA-5442

Location: Gettysburg College  
Old Quadrangle (West Side)  
Gettysburg, Adams County, Pennsylvania

USGS Gettysburg Quadrangle, Universal Transverse  
Mercator Coordinates: 18.308790.4411600

Present Owner/Occupant: Gettysburg College  
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325

Use: Academic Building

Significance: Glatfelter Hall was, and continues to be, the facility which is at the heart of the academic program of Gettysburg College. Up until the building boom of the 1950's and 60's, within the walls of this building over 90% of the teaching and learning at Gettysburg occurred. Glatfelter Hall still contains over 30% of all the classroom space and over 40% of the academic office space on campus. It is impossible even today for a student to graduate from Gettysburg without spending a significant amount of time in this building.

During the last 100 years the interior has undergone a number of minor renovations. The Victorian Romanesque exterior has remained architecturally unchanged since 1889.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: 1888-1889. These dates verified by the Minutes of the Gettysburg College Board of Trustees 1888-1889.  
See the photographic documentation section for a picture of the cornerstone laying ceremony held on June 27, 1888. This building was dedicated on September 11, 1889 with Pennsylvania Governor James A. Beaver giving the introductory remarks.
2. Architect: John A. Dempwolf (1848-1926). The following information about Dempwolf comes from Charles Glatfelter's book entitled "A Salutary Influence: Gettysburg College, 1832-1985, (1987), p. 253. Born in Germany, Dempwolf came to York, Pennsylvania in 1867 and learned the carpentry trade. He became interested in architecture and pursued a degree at the Cooper Union Institute in New York from which he graduated in 1873. After working in Boston and Philadelphia, in 1876 he opened an office in York and began a 50 year practice. Dempwolf designed several hundred structures in York as well as a dozen in Gettysburg between 1883 and 1900.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: Gettysburg College.
4. Builder, Contractor, Supplier: In December 1887, the firm of William A. Slagle of Hanover (PA) was awarded the construction contract at the low bid price of \$77,457. Slagle had completed large buildings in Baltimore, Frederick, Maryland (The National Bank of Frederick) and in Hanover (The Hanover Opera House). The structure Slagle was engaged to construct measured 162 by 69 feet, with a tower 143 feet high. The required materials included dressed granite for the foundation, 1,200,000 bricks and a substantial amount of Hummelstown brownstone trim. There is no indication of where these materials were actually manufactured, however, the transportation of these materials required the Gettysburg and Harrisburg Railroad to lay a 1,200-foot spur from its mainline to the southern edge of the building site (This information gleaned from an article by Norman O. Forness, "Glatfelter Hall: Gilded Age Building Reflects A Past Era in American History," Gettysburg College Bulletin, October, 1972, p. 3-4).

Gettysburg College, Glatfelter Hall  
HABS NO. PA-5442 (Page 3)

5. Original Plans and construction: The building's external appearance has not been altered. Original cost to construct was \$77,457.
6. Alterations and additions: College records (Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Gettysburg College, 1928 and 1929) indicate that Glatfelter was subject to renovation in 1929. The documentation of what was specifically done is non existent. However, the physical evidence suggests that the original wooden flooring was replaced with concrete floors for fire proofing purposes and the original interior doors were replaced. Over the years minor changes have been made to existing office and classroom space however, the main floor lobby area remains as it was when the building was completed in 1889.

B. Historical Context:

Originally known as Recitation Hall, this building was renamed Glatfelter Hall in 1912 in honor of Philip H. Glatfelter, a Spring Grove (PA) paper manufacturer who in 1888 contributed over \$20,000 toward the construction of the building. P.H. Glatfelter was a long standing supporter of the College and a member of the College's Board of Trustees for 19 years.

Glatfelter Hall played a small part in our nation's history. During his presidency, Dwight Eisenhower used a suite on the first floor as an office. It is reported that Eisenhower's first public announcement of his intention to run for a second term was made from the front steps of Glatfelter.

During the last 100 years Glatfelter has served as not only the College's chief academic building but as the chief administrative building as well. Glatfelter has also housed the College's library, museum, 2 literary societies, and the infirmary. Little can be found about the building's relationship with the local community. A source that may provide additional information would be the archives of the local community newspaper, The Gettysburg Times (and it predecessors).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

Gettysburg College, Glatfelter Hall  
HABS NO. PA-5442 (Page 4)

1. Architectural Character: The architectural aspects of this building can best be described as eclectic. According to work by Norman O. Forness, the architect, J.A. Dempwolf, gave this building a number of medieval features popular in the 1880's. Rounded arches at major entrances, turrets and bizarre little faces hewn into the stone trim portrayed a medieval theme on an otherwise non-Romanesque building. The entrance on the north side has a colorful tile floor and an elaborate iron gate which seems nearly moorish in origin. The massive and imposing tower is also in keeping with the architectural trend known as Victorian Romanesque popular in the 1880's and 1890's. Glatfelter Hall reflects the influence of that trend.
2. Condition of fabric: Very good condition. Bricks recently cleaned and re-pointed.

B. Description of Exteriors:

1. Overall Dimensions: This building is 156 feet 6 inches long and 58 feet 4 inches wide in the middle. There are 18 bays across the front elevation in an irregular formation. Five stories include a basement. Building is slightly wider on the north and south ends where 2 wings exist. South wing is 66 feet 3 inches wide and the north wing is 85 feet 6 inches wide.
2. Foundation: Field stone foundation walls approximately 24 inches thick and extending to a height of approximately 5 feet above the basement floor. Setting on the fieldstone wall is a granite base approximately 2 feet high. The field stone wall is below grade and is not seen. The granite base is topped with a 3 inch wash. On top of that is a rusticated brownstone base six feet high and on top of that is a sloped brownstone cap which forms the water table for the building.
3. Walls: Rusticated stone lintels and sills are found around the doors and window sills of the building. Some are continuous while others are segmental. There is also a rusticated band which runs continuous at the roof line. Brownstone was quarried at Hummelstown, PA. The bricks are salmon in color and it is believed that they were also made within the proximity of Gettysburg. The brick work is in a running bond. The granite base is smooth and gray.
4. Structural system, framing: The structural system

Gettysburg College, Glatfelter Hall  
HABS NO. PA-5442 (Page 5)

throughout the building is steel beams and bar joists with a metal deck and concrete for the floor finishing. This floor framing was installed in the 1929 renovation. The roof structure is made up of wood rafters and large built-up wood trusses. Typical size of rafter members being 6" x 8" and typical size of trusses ranging from 4 to 12 feet high. There are continuous bearing walls along the west side of the central corridor and at the north and south end of the building which run east and west. All of the exterior walls of the building are load bearing walls.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: There are five entrances into the building. The predominant entrance is on the east side at the base of the bell tower. This entrance at the bell tower is recessed several feet into the bell tower which forms a covered entrance. The entrance at the south of the building is also recessed into the building about seven feet. The basement entrances on the north side and on the south side are flush with the building.

The most predominant porch is on the north side. Entry into this porch is either from the north corridor or from the northwest stair tower. This area is approximately 8 feet wide, 28 feet long, with a sloped wooden roof covered in slate and accented with three semi-circular windows. The major entrances on the east, north and south ends feature original granite steps as well as segmented stone arches over the entrance ways. No balconies or bulkheads in the building.

6. Chimneys: There are five brick chimneys spaced across the length of the building. They feature decorative stone caps, some being symmetrical and other being asymmetrical.
7. Openings:
  - A. Doorways and doors: Main entrance at bell tower has a pair of bronze covered doors and bronze covered wooden door frames which are recessed into the bell tower. The south and north entrances are both recessed and have a single set of bronze covered doors and frames. The west and east basement level doors, not recessed, are made of wood.
  - B. Windows and shutters: Windows are typically double hung with the bottom half divided in half by a

vertical mullion and the upper sash are divided in various numbered groups - usually 8 to 12. Of the existing 180+ windows there are over 50 different configurations of either size or division. The roof dormers contain 4 over 4 double hung windows. Some on the first floor are grouped in pairs with a continuous transom over the top.

In the central stairway on the west side of the building there is a large arched window and a grouping of double hinge and fixed windows below the semi-circular window. At the east and west side of the south end of the attic there is a large fixed window that is divided into multiple panes. There are no shutters on this building.

8. Roof:

- A. Shape, covering: Steep sloped slate roof made up of an asymmetrical configuration of intersecting ridges some of which terminate at parapet walls and one which terminates in a semi-circular configuration. The pitch in this roof is 10/12. The slate roof has copper valley flashing and wall and counter flashing.
- B. Cornice, eaves: Eaves are accented with a stone band and have an exposed gutter and drain spout system.
- C. Dormers, cupolas, towers: There are twelve dormers and 2 circular turrets which project above the roof and have cone shaped slate roofs. At the center of the east elevation there is a bell tower, approximately 20 feet square and 143 feet tall. This tower is of brick construction, with a stone base. It has a pyramid shaped slate covered roof with a brick turret at each corner covered by a stone cap on each. The uppermost area of the tower, below the roof, is open and contains a bell connected to a clock system located 1 floor below. The exterior of the tower on the north, east and south sides contains a clock face approximately 4 feet in diameter. The clock and bell are original to the building and still in use.

C. Description of Exterior:

- 1. Floor plans: See attached sketch plans.
- 2. Stairways: The building has 3 stairways. The central

Gettysburg College, Glatfelter Hall  
HABS NO. PA- 5442 (Page 7)

and most predominant stairway is located in the middle of the building on the west side. It is a steel framed open type stair which is covered with terrazzo treads marble risers. It has ornate steel pickets and an oak handrail. This stair extends from the basement to the third floor. On the northwest corner of the building there is a semi-circular cast iron stair intended for emergency exit that extends from the third floor to the north porch area. At the south east corner there is a cast iron spiral stair that extends from the third floor to grade.

3. Flooring: In the 1929 renovation the wooden floors were replaced with gray terrazzo. The remaining flooring is covered with resilient tile or carpeting.
4. Walls and ceiling finish: Typically throughout the building the walls are painted plaster. In the first floor corridor there is a 4 foot high marble wainscoting. On the ceiling of the first and second floor corridors there is a decorative plaster molding (approximately six inches wide) attached to plaster ceilings. The remaining ceilings are a suspended acoustical tile type ceiling. Wall colors vary greatly. Existing plaster ceilings and acoustical ceilings are painted off-white.
5. Openings:
  - A. Doorways and doors: The typical doorway consists of a two panelled door, the top panel either being solid wood or glass and the bottom panel always being solid wood. Color of doors vary greatly.
  - B. Windows: No notable interior window trim features.
6. Decorative features and trim: None
7. Hardware: None. All original hardware probably removed in 1929 renovations.
8. Mechanical Equipment:
  - A. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Steam heating system, typically exposed supply piping and condensate lines with radiators in each room.
  - B. Lights: Two foot by four foot fluorescent tube lighting. Two decorative chandeliers on the first floor, date back to the 1920's.



Gettysburg College, Glatfelter Hall  
HABS NO. PA- 5442 (Page 8)

- C. Plumbing: Rather non-descript. The two major toilet facilities are located in the basement. These toilet areas are in their original location and date from the 1920's.

9. Original furnishings: None

D. SITE:

1. General setting and orientation: The length of the building is very close to a true north/south compass reading with the bell tower being situated on the east side. Topography is generally level but slightly lower at the south end than the north end. The grade level on the east side of the building is higher than the west side by approximately 4 feet.
2. Historic landscape design: The design of the quadrangle where Glatfelter Hall is located has actually changed very little since the late 1800's. The focal point of the quad is Pennsylvania Hall, the first and oldest college building. Located south west of Pennsylvania Hall, Glatfelter Hall is certainly the next major focal point in that area. The major entry to this quad is from the south east. From that approach a visitor is met with a full view of the south side of Pennsylvania Hall and through the mature trees, a view of the east side of Glatfelter Hall.
3. Outbuildings: None

Part III. Sources of Information

- A. Architectural drawings: The most recent drawings were copied for this documentation. The original drawings are non-existent.
- B. Historic views: Refer to the Index to Photographs which follows.
- C. Interviews: Telephone interview of David J. Drasba, (February 27, 1989). Mr. Drasba is the chief Architect for the current renovation project and provided much of the architectural information. Personal interview of W. Thomas Phizacklea, Director of Auxiliary Services, Gettysburg College (March 6, 1989). Mr. Phizacklea is a resident expert on campus buildings.
- D. Bibliography:

Gettysburg College, Glatfelter Hall  
HABS NO. PA-5442 (Page 9)

Business Office Files; Gettysburg College, interior sketch plans of Glatfelter Hall and a site sketch plan of the campus.

Forness, Norman. "Glatfelter Hall: Gilded Age Building Reflects A Post Era in Academic History". Gettysburg College Bulletin, October 1972, 3-7.

Glatfelter, Charles. "A Salutary Influence: Gettysburg College, 1832-1985". Mechanicsburg (PA): W & M Printing, Inc., 1987.

Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Gettysburg College. Gettysburg College Archives, Gettysburg, PA.

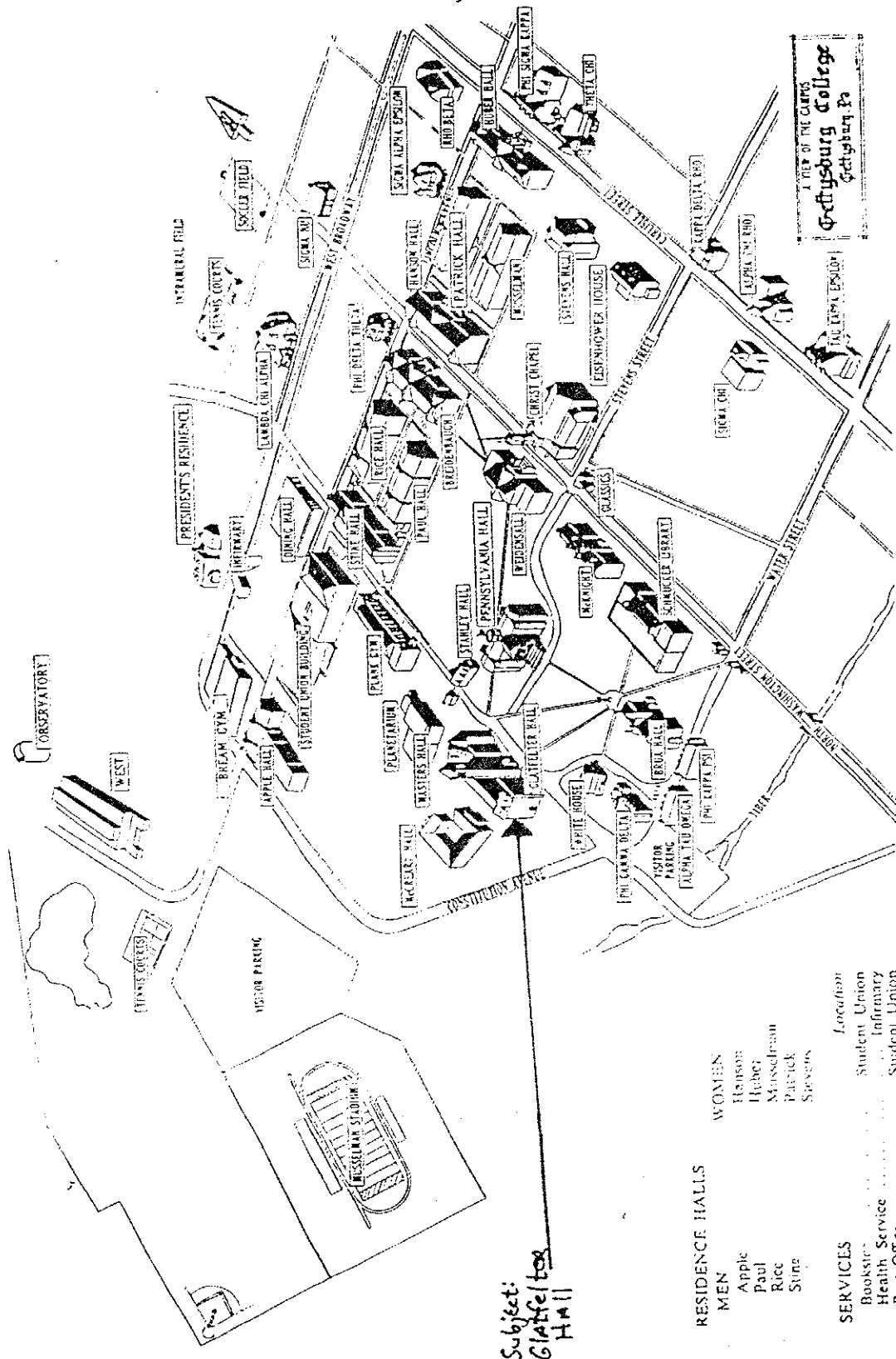
- E. Likely sources not yet investigated: Local Newspapers.
- F. Supplemental materials: Attached are interior sketch plans and a site/campus sketch plan of the campus.

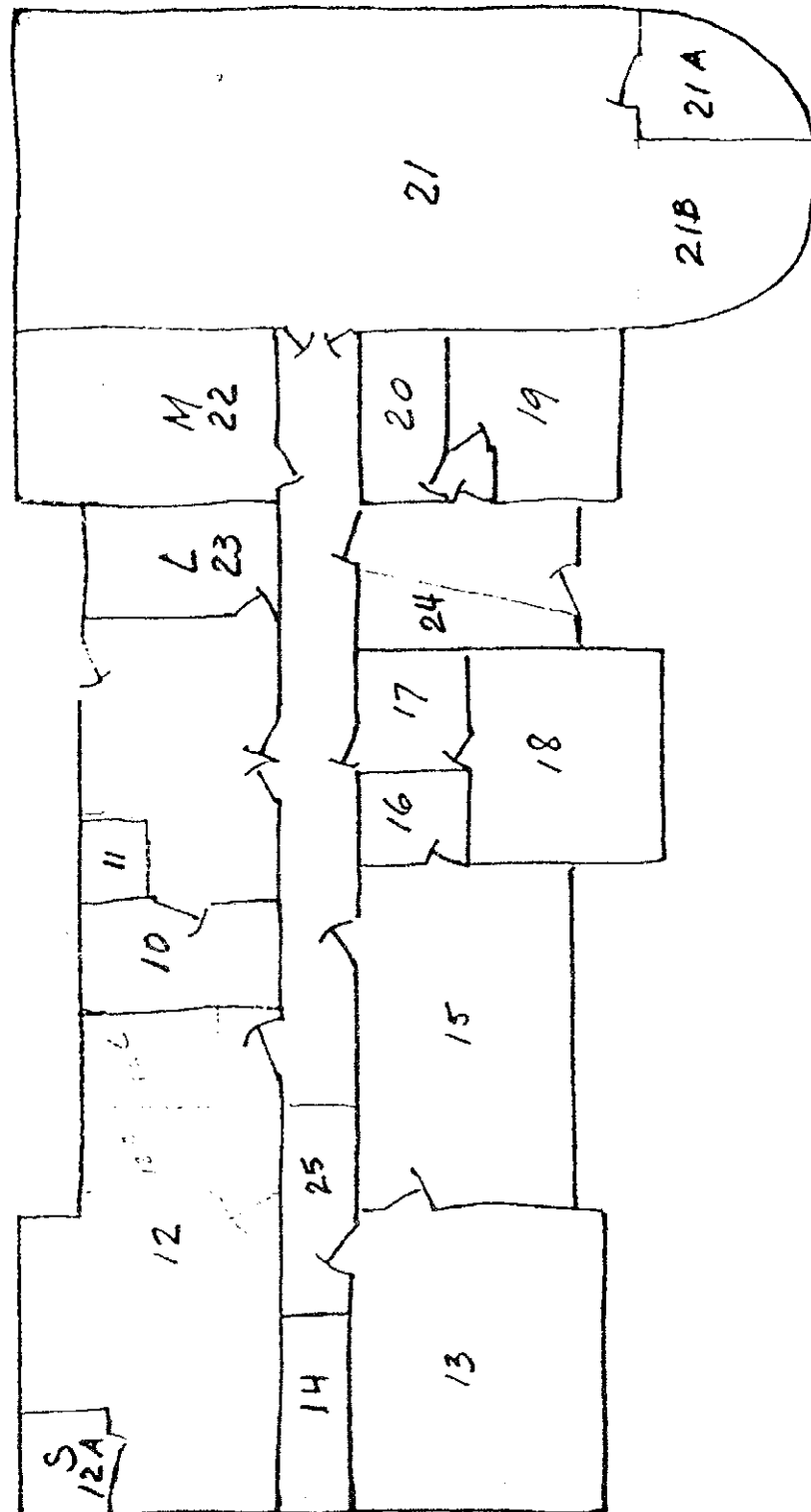
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project that prompted this documentation is one that will significantly renovate Glatfelter Hall. The most dramatic change will be an exterior addition on the south side of the building. This addition will be an enclosed elevator and stair tower leading from the attic area to the basement. This addition will provide additional emergency exits and make the building accessible for the handicapped. The attic area will be converted from unusable space to much needed academic office and classroom space. The basement, first, second and third floors will also be renovated to allow a more efficient use of space. More bathrooms will be placed throughout the building. The existing slate roof will be replaced with a new slate roof.

The federal agency involved with this project is the Department of Education (DOE) under the College Facilities Loan Program. The DOE will loan the College 3 million dollars to be used for these renovations. Renovations are scheduled to begin in April 1989 and end in the summer of 1990.

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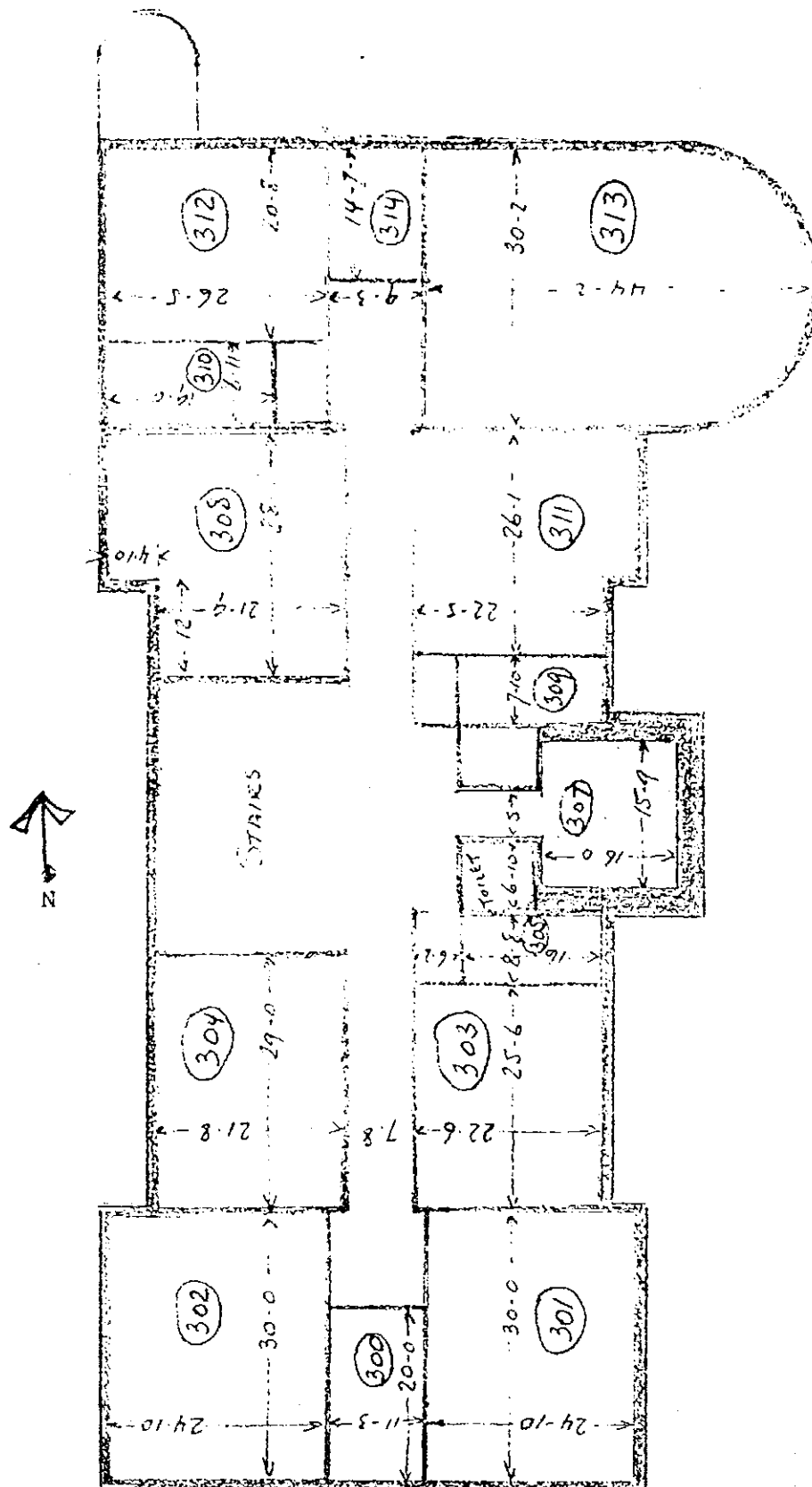




BASEMENT.



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR